

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 CAPE T 01542 302218Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 HA-05 ACDA-12 /095 W
-----061119 011332Z /50

R 291427Z SEP 78
FM AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7636
INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CAPE TOWN 1542

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PDEV, PGOV, SF
SUBJ: ELECTION DAY ATMOSPHERICS IN CAPE TOWN

REF: PRETORIA 5767

1. IF THE CROWD IN FRONT OF PARLIAMENT BUILDING YESTERDAY WAS NOT PARTICULARLY SURPRISED WHEN THE NATIONALIST PARTY SUCCESSION RACE RESOLVED ITSELF IN FAVOR OF P.W. BOTHA, NEITHER WAS IT VERY ENTHUSIASTIC. MOST OF THE APPROXIMATELY 2,000 (PREDOMINATELY WHITE) ONLOOKERS WHO ARRIVED AFTER VORSTER MADE HIS SHORT PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION SPEECH ON THE SEANTE STEPS AT NOON WERE FOR ANOTHER BOTHA. THE CROWD STOOD SILENTLY, ALMOST SOMBERLY, UNTIL CAUCUS MEMBERS BEGAIN EMERGING FROM PARLIAMENT AT 2 P.M. SECURITY WAS ALMOST NON-EXISTENT, WITH ONLY AN ORNAMENTAL IRON RAILING SEPARATING THE CROWD FROM THE CAUCUS.

2. AS THE DOORS AT HEAD OF SENATE STEPS SWUNG OPEN, CAUCUS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 CAPE T 01542 302218Z

MEMBERS WERE MET BY MILD APPLAUSE AND QUITE CLEAR CHANT OF "WE WANT PIK." THIS QUICKLY DISSIPATED, REPLACED BY EQUALLY SHORT-LIVED BOOING, AS CROWD SPIED P.W. BOTHA, SPORTING VICTORY CARNATIONS AND BEING ESCORTED BY PARTY WHIPS TO THE MICROPHONES. P.W., IN HIS MOMENT OF TRIUMPH, GAVE NO SIGN OF BEING SURPRISED OR DISAPPOINTED BY THIS UNGENEROUS RECEPTION, AND HE LAUNCHED INTO HIS

FIRST SPEECH TO NATION AS PRIME MINISTER (REFTEL).
CROWD SOON BEGAN DRIFTING AWAY. SCENE ON PARLIAMENT
STEPS CLOSED WITH PHALANX OF CAUCUS MEMBERS SINGING
"DIE STEM" IN AFRIKAANS.

3. NEXT, AFTER RECEIVING OFFICIAL CONGRATULATIONS FROM
COLLEAGUES, AND UNCUSTOMARILY SHAKING HANDS WITH
PARLIAMENTARY GARDENERS AND PRESS, P.W. PROCEEDED UP
PARLIAMENT STREET TO THE TUYN HUIS (TEMPORARY RESIDENCE
OF ACTING STATE PRESIDENT SENATOR VILJOEN). AFTER
BEING DIRECTED BY VOLJOEN TO FORM A GOVERNMENT, P.W.
HELD HIS FIRST PRIME MINISTERIAL PRESS CONFERENCE.

4. KEY POINTS MADE BY PRIME MINISTER AT PRESS
CONFERENCE WERE:

A) CABINET: HE WILL NOT MAKE ANY MAJOR CHANGES IN THE CABINET
IN NEAR FUTURE. "FOR AS LONG AS IT'S SUITABLE AND PRACTICAL".
P.W. HIMSELF WILL HOLD THE DEFENSE PORTFOLIO (ALTHOUGH A DEPUTY
DEFENSE MINISTER MAY BE APPOINTED).

B) ON NAMIBIA: "THE DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS.
WE ARE A SELF-RESPECTING COUNTRY, AND WILL DISCUSS MATTERS
WITH ANY OTHER COUNTRY ONLY ON THE BASIS OF SELF-RESPECT AND
MUTUAL RESPECT."

C) PROPOSED NEW CONSTITUTION: WORK WAS CONTINUING, AND THE PRIME
MINISTER WOULD MAKE AN ANNOUNCEMENT DURING THE NEXT
PARLIAMENTARY SESSION. THERE WOULD ALSO BE A POLICY STATEMENT
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 CAPE T 01542 302218Z

ON THE "COLORED" PEOPLE SOMETIME SOON.

5. COMMENT: A BASIC QUESTION EMERGING FROM YESTERDAY'S EVENTS
IS JUST WHAT LASTING DAMAGE, IF ANY, THIS HARD-FOUGHT ELECTION
CAMPAIGN HAS DONE TO NATIONALIST PARTY UNITY. THERE ARE PRESS
REPORTS THAT PIK BOTHA TELEPHONED CONNIE MULDER MIDNIGHT WEDNESDAY
AND OFFERED TO WITHDRAW FROM RACE IN FAVOR OF P.W., IF MULDER
WOULD DO LIKEWISE. MULDER REPORTEDLY REFUSED, EITHER BECAUSE
HE STILL THOUGHT HE HAD GOOD CHANCE TO WIN, OR BECAUSE WITHDRAWAL
WOULD HAVE LOOKED LIKE ADMISSION OF GUILT OF RUMORED WRONG
DOING. MULDER CONCEDED TO REPORTERS AFTER THE ELECTION THAT
INFORMATION DEPARTMENT "DEBACLE" HAD DEFINITELY AFFECTED HIS
CHANCES ADVERSELY. HE CAREFULLY REFRAINED HOWEVER, BOTH FROM
CRITICISM OF FORMER PRIME MINISTER VORSTER, WHOSE ELEVENTH
HOUR INFORMATION SCANDAL STATEMENT HAD LEFT A LARGE QUESTION
MARK OVER MULDER CAMPAIGN, AND OF PIK BOTHA, WHOSE CANDIDACY
SPLIT TRANSVAAL DELEGATION AND PAVED THE WAY FOR P.W.'S VICTORY.

6. NEW PRIME MINISTER, MEANTIME, SET OUT TO SCUTTLE ANY TALK
OF PARTY RIFT BY ANNOUNCING THAT MULDER AND PIK HAD BOTH PLEDGED
TO HIM THEIR UNCONDITIONAL SUPPORT. WHILE MULDER POSED FOR UNITY
PICTURES WITH P.W. AT YESTERDAY AFTERNOON'S PRESS CONFERENCE,

JIMMY KRUGER AND MULDER'S UNHAPPY TRANSVAAL SUPPORTERS
RETIRED TO LADIES BAR OF THE TOWN HOUSE HOTEL AND TRIED AT
LEAST TO FORGET, IF NOT FORGIVE, THEIR DEFEAT.
AHLGREN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION RESULTS, PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS, ELECTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 sep 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978CAPET01542
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780401-0365
Format: TEL
From: CAPE TOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978097/aaaaafqf.tel
Line Count: 120
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 8589b350-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 PRETORIA 5767
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1445352
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ELECTION DAY ATMOSPHERICS IN CAPE TOWN
TAGS: PINT, PDEV, PGOV, SF
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/8589b350-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014